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Mayor Dixon Announces Hilton Hotels Corporation Scholarship Fund for Baltimore City High School Graduates

Baltimore, MD (March 7, 2007) – Mayor Sheila Dixon joined representatives from Hilton Hotels Corporation, the National Academy Foundation, CollegeBound Foundation and the Baltimore Hotel Corporation, at Digital Harbor High School in Federal Hill to announce that the Hilton Hotels Corporation has established the Hilton Baltimore Convention Center Hotel Scholarship Fund.

Executives from Hilton Hotels Corporation, which will operate and manage the 757-room Hilton Baltimore Convention Center Hotel now under construction at 401 West Pratt Street in downtown Baltimore, have expressed a strong desire to partner with Baltimore City Schools and encourage young people with an interest in hotel management and hospitality.

“Hilton has been a strong economic partner for the City of Baltimore, and today it has become a strong partner for our students as well,” said Mayor Dixon. “I commend the Hilton Hotels Corporation for its willingness to help young people achieve the dream of a college education and I look forward to strengthening the City’s relationship with this great corporate citizen.”

Within 30 days of the opening of the new hotel (scheduled for completion in August 2008) Hilton Hotels Corporation will contribute an initial \$200,000 to the scholarship fund, with matching donations to follow each year for up 14 years provided that Hilton Hotels remains the manager of the Convention Center Hotel.

When fully funded over the next 15 years, Hilton will have contributed a total sum of \$3 million to the scholarship fund.

“Hilton is pleased to play an integral role in increasing educational opportunities for the young people of Baltimore City, and especially Baltimore City public high school graduates who intend to enroll or are enrolled in college hotel, hospitality, and/or restaurant management programs,” says Matthew J. Hart, president and chief operating officer, Hilton Hotels Corporation. “As we continue our commitment in supporting greater education opportunities for deserving and eligible graduates, we look forward to partnering in this scholarship fund effort with the National Academy Foundation and CollegeBound Foundation in Baltimore.”

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An agreement between the Baltimore Hotel Corporation, Hilton Hotels Corporation, the National Academy Foundation (NAF) and the CollegeBound Foundation outlining management and operation criteria for the Hilton Baltimore Convention Center Hotel Scholarship Fund was approved by Baltimore Hotel Corporation Board of Directors on December 15, 2006.

“Hilton Hotels Corporation is to be congratulated for helping to create a qualified base of employees for Baltimore’s hospitality industry,” said Baltimore Hotel Corporation Chairman M.J. “Jay” Brodie. “This scholarship fund will be a boost for those students who need financial assistance to pursue their career goals.”

The National Academy Foundation High School is a Baltimore City public high school, currently achieving 96% attendance. Located on the Federal Hill campus of Digital Harbor High School, its Academy of Hospitality & Tourism prepares students for college and professional success, providing extensive work-based learning experiences in partnership with over 60 related hospitality and tourism businesses. NAF Baltimore is the first of its kind in the country to form one high school integrating three academies: Information Technology, Finance, and Hospitality & Tourism, all affiliated with the National Academy Foundation.

Jeffrey M. Homes, Co-Chair of the Board of Directors of the National Academy Foundation High School, stated, "The Hilton Hotel Corporation scholarship program will encourage NAF students to reach for excellence in their academic work. We are very proud of our students graduating from the Academy of Hospitality & Tourism and excited that this financial assistance is available for them. We are equally excited that the Hilton will be working closely with our students and faculty to help jump start careers in the field.”

The CollegeBound Foundation, administrator of the Hilton Scholarship Fund, is a charitable foundation in Baltimore City whose mission is to make a college education accessible to graduates of public high schools in the city by, among other things, providing counseling and other services in Baltimore City public high schools and providing scholarship grants to eligible graduates of those schools.

As administrator, CollegeBound, each year after establishment of the scholarship fund, will award scholarships from that fund to qualified and eligible students enrolled in hotel, hospitality and/or restaurant programs at two or four year colleges. The scholarships will be awarded in the following order: 1) eligible graduates of NAF will be given first priority for the awards; and 2) second priority will be given to graduates of Baltimore City public high schools other than NAF.

“CollegeBound Foundation Executive Director, Dr. Craig Spilman, views the Hilton Convention Center Hotel scholarships “as a terrific opportunity to increase the number of Baltimore high school graduates who will realize their dream of a career in the hospitality/tourism industry and based on what we observe, many will return to the Baltimore region to enter our workforce.”

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